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## I.—THE STUDY OF HINDU GRAMMAR AND THE STUDY OF SANSKRIT.

To the beginning study of Sanskrit it was an immense advantage that there existed a Hindu science of grammar, and one of so high a character. To realize how great the advantage, one has only to compare the case of languages destitute of it—as for instance the Zend. It is a science of ancient date, and has even exercised a shaping influence on the language in which all or nearly all the classical literature has been produced. It was an outcome of the same general spirit which is seen in the so careful textual preservation and tradition of the ancient sacred literature of India; and there is doubtless a historical connection between the one and the other; though of just what nature is as yet unclear.

The character of the Hindu grammatical science was, as is usual in such cases, determined by the character of the language which was its subject. The Sanskrit is above all things an analyzable language, one admitting of the easy and distinct separation of ending from stem, and of derivative suffix from primitive word, back to the ultimate attainable elements, the so-called roots. Accordingly, in its perfected form (for all the preparatory stages are unknown to us), the Hindu grammar offers us an established body of roots, with rules for their conversion into stems and for the inflection of the latter, and also for the accompanying phonetic changes—this last involving and resting upon a phonetic science of extraordinary merit, which has called forth the highest admiration of modern scholars; nothing at all approaching it has been produced by any ancient people; it has served as the foundation in no small degree of our own phonetics: even as our science of

grammar and of language has borrowed much from India. The treatment of syntax is markedly inferior—though, after all, hardly more than in a measure to correspond with the inferiority of the Sanskrit sentence in point of structure, as compared with the Latin and the Greek. Into any more detailed description it is not necessary to our present purpose to enter; and the matter is one pretty well understood by the students of Indo-European language. It is generally well known also that the Hindu science, after a however long history of elaboration, became fixed for all future time in the system of a single grammarian, named Pāṇini (believed, though on grounds far from convincing, to have lived two or three centuries before the Christian era). Pāṇini's work has been commented without end, corrected in minor points, condensed, re-cast in arrangement, but never rebelled against or superseded; and it is still the authoritative standard of good Sanskrit. Its form of presentation is of the strangest: a miracle of ingenuity, but of perverse and wasted ingenuity. The only object aimed at in it is brevity, at the sacrifice of everything else—of order, of clearness, of even intelligibility except by the aid of keys and commentaries and lists of words, which then are furnished in profusion. To determine a grammatical point out of it is something like constructing a passage of text out of an *index verborum*: if you are sure that you have gathered up every word that belongs in the passage, and have put them all in the right order, you have got the right reading; but only then. If you have mastered Pāṇini sufficiently to bring to bear upon the given point every rule that relates to it, and in due succession, you have settled the case; but that is no easy task. For example, it takes nine mutually limitative rules, from all parts of the text-book, to determine whether a certain aorist shall be *ajāgariṣam* or *ajāgāriṣam* (the case is reported in the preface to Müller's grammar): there is lacking only a tenth rule, to tell us that the whole word is a false and never-used formation. Since there is nothing to show how far the application of a rule reaches, there are provided treatises of laws of interpretation to be applied to them; but there is a residual rule underlying and determining the whole: that both the grammar and the laws of interpretation must be so construed as to yield good and acceptable forms, and not otherwise—and this implies (if that were needed) a condemnation of the whole mode of presentation of the system as a failure.

Theoretically, all that is prescribed and allowed by Pāṇini and

his accepted commentators is Sanskrit, and nothing else is entitled to the name. The young pandit, then, is expected to master the system and to govern his Sanskrit speech and writing by it. This he does, with immense pains and labor, then naturally valuing the acquisition in part according to what it has cost him. The same course was followed by those European scholars who had to make themselves the pupils of Hindu teachers, in acquiring Sanskrit for the benefit of Europe ; and (as was said above) they did so to their very great advantage. Equally as a matter of course, the same must still be done by any one who studies in India, who has to deal with the native scholars, win their confidence and respect, and gain their aid : they must be met upon their own ground. But it is a question, and one of no slight practical importance, how far Western scholars in general are to be held to this method : whether Pāṇini is for us also the law of Sanskrit usage ; whether we are to study the native Hindu grammar in order to learn Sanskrit.

There would be less reason for asking this question, if the native grammar were really the instrumentality by which the conserving tradition of the old language had been carried on. But that is a thing both in itself impossible and proved by the facts of the case to be untrue. No one ever mastered a list of roots with rules for their extension and inflection, and then went to work to construct texts upon that basis. Rather, the transmission of Sanskrit has been like the transmission of any highly cultivated language, only with differences of degree. The learner has his models which he imitates ; he makes his speech after the example of that of his teacher, only under the constant government of grammatical rule, enforced by the requirement to justify out of the grammar any word or form as to which a question is raised. Thus the language has moved on by its own inertia, only falling, with further removal from its natural vernacular basis, more and more passively and mechanically into the hands of the grammarians. All this is like the propagation of literary English or German ; only that here there is much more of a vernacular usage that shows itself able to override and modify the rules of grammar. It is yet more closely like the propagation of Latin ; only that here the imitation of previous usage is frankly acknowledged as the guide, there being no iron system of grammar to assume to take its place. That such has really been the history of the later or classical Sanskrit is sufficiently shown by the facts. There is no absolute coinci-

dence between it and the language which Pāṇini teaches. The former, indeed, includes little that the grammarians forbid ; but, on the other hand, it lacks a great deal that they allow or prescribe. The difference between the two is so great that Benfey, a scholar deeply versed in the Hindu science, calls it a grammar without a corresponding language, as he calls the pre-classical dialects a language without a grammar.<sup>1</sup> If such a statement can be made with any reason, it would appear that there is to be assumed, as the subject of Hindu grammatical science, a peculiar dialect of Sanskrit, which we may call the grammarians' Sanskrit, different both from the pre-classical dialects and from the classical, and standing either between them or beside them in the general history of Indian language. And it becomes a matter of importance to us to ascertain what this grammarians' Sanskrit is, how it stands related to the other varieties of Sanskrit, and whether it is entitled to be the leading object of our Sanskrit study. Such questions must be settled by a comparison of the dialect referred to with the other dialects, and of them with one another. And it will be found, upon such comparison, that the earlier and later forms of the Vedic dialect, the dialects of the Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras, and the classical Sanskrit, stand in a filial relation, each to its predecessor, are nearly or quite successive forms of the same language ; while the grammarians' Sanskrit, as distinguished from them, is a thing of grammatical rule merely, having never had any real existence as a language, and being on the whole unknown in practice to even the most modern pandits.

The main thing which makes of the grammarians' Sanskrit a special and peculiar language is its list of roots. Of these there are reported to us about two thousand, with no intimation of any difference in character among them, or warning that a part of them may and that another part may not be drawn upon for forms to be actually used ; all stand upon the same plane. But more than half—actually more than half—of them never have been met with, and never will be met with, in the Sanskrit literature of any age. When this fact began to come to light, it was long fondly hoped, or believed, that the missing elements would yet turn up in some corner of the literature not hitherto ransacked ; but all expectation of that has now been abandoned. One or another does appear from time to time ; but what are they among so many ? The last not-

<sup>1</sup> *Einleitung in die Grammatik der vedischen Sprache*, 1874, pp. 3, 4.

able case was that of the root *stigh*, discovered in the *Māitrāyaṇī-Saṁhitā*, a text of the *Brāhmaṇa* period ; but the new roots found in such texts are apt to turn out wanting in the lists of the grammarians. Beyond all question, a certain number of cases are to be allowed for, of real roots, proved such by the occurrence of their evident cognates in other related languages, and chancing not to appear in the known literature ; but they can go only a very small way indeed toward accounting for the eleven hundred unauthenticated roots. Others may have been assumed as underlying certain derivatives or bodies of derivatives—within due limits, a perfectly legitimate proceeding ; but the cases thus explainable do not prove to be numerous. There remain then the great mass, whose presence in the lists no ingenuity has yet proved sufficient to account for. And in no small part, they bear their falsity and artificiality on the surface, in their phonetic form and in the meanings ascribed to them ; we can confidently say that the Sanskrit language, known to us through a long period of development, neither had nor could have any such roots. How the grammarians came to concoct their list, rejected in practice by themselves and their own pupils, is hitherto an unexplained mystery. No special student of the native grammar, to my knowledge, has attempted to cast any light upon it ; and it was left for Dr. Edgren, no partisan of the grammarians, to group and set forth the facts for the first time, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (Vol. XI, 1882 [but the article printed in 1879], pp. 1-55), adding a list of the real roots, with brief particulars as to their occurrence.<sup>1</sup> It is quite clear, with reference to this fundamental and most important item, of what character the grammarians' Sanskrit is. The real Sanskrit of the latest period is, as concerns its roots, a true successor to that of the earliest period, and through the known intermediates ; it has lost some of the roots of its predecessors, as each of these some belonging to its own predecessors or predecessor ; it has, also like these, won a certain number not earlier found : both in such measure as was to be expected. As for the rest of the asserted roots of the grammar, to account for them is not a matter that concerns at all the Sanskrit language and its history ; it only concerns the history of the Hindu science of grammar. That, too,

<sup>1</sup> I have myself now in press a much fuller account of the quotable roots of the language, with all their quotable tense-stems and primary derivatives—everything accompanied by a definition of the period of its known occurrence in the history of the language.

has come to be pretty generally acknowledged.<sup>1</sup> Every one who knows anything of the history of Indo-European etymology knows how much mischief the grammarians' list of roots wrought in the hands of the earlier more incautious and credulous students of Sanskrit: how many false and worthless derivations were founded upon them. That sort of work, indeed, is not yet entirely a thing of the past; still, it has come to be well understood by most scholars that no alleged Sanskrit root can be accepted as real unless it is supported by such a use in the literary records of the language as authenticates it—for there are such things in the later language as artificial occurrences, forms made for once or twice from roots taken out of the grammarians' list, by a natural license, which one is only surprised not to see oftener availed of (there are hardly more than a dozen or two of such cases quotable): that they appear so seldom is the best evidence of the fact already pointed out above, that the grammar had, after all, only a superficial and negative influence upon the real tradition of the language.

It thus appears that a Hindu grammarian's statement as to the fundamental elements of his language is without authority until tested by the actual facts of the language, as represented by the Sanskrit literature. But the principle won here is likely to prove of universal application; for we have no reason to expect to find the grammarians absolutely trustworthy in other departments of their work, when they have failed so signally in one; there can be nothing in their system that will not require to be tested by the recorded facts of the language, in order to determine its true value. How this is, we will proceed to ascertain by examining a few examples.

In the older language, but not in the oldest (for it is wanting in the Veda), there is formed a periphrastic future tense active by compounding a *nomen agentis* with an auxiliary, the present tense of the verb *as* 'be': thus, *dātā 'smi* (literally *dator sum*) 'I will give,' etc. It is quite infrequent as compared with the other future, yet common enough to require to be regarded as a part of the general Sanskrit verb-system. To this active tense the grammarians give a corresponding middle, although the auxiliary in its independent

<sup>1</sup> Not, indeed, universally; one may find among the selected verbs that are conjugated in full at the end of F. M. Müller's Sanskrit Grammar, no very small number of those that are utterly unknown to Sanskrit usage, ancient or modern.

use has no middle inflection ; it is made with endings modified so as to stand in the usual relation of middle endings to active, and further with conversion in 1st sing. of the radical *s* to *h*—a very anomalous substitution, of which there is not, I believe, another example in the language. Now what support has this middle tense in actual use? Only this : that in the Brāhmaṇas occur four sporadic instances of attempts to make by analogy middle forms for this tense (they are all reported in my Sanskrit Grammar, § 947 ; further search has brought to light no additional examples) : two of them are 1st sing., one having the form *se* for the auxiliary, the other *he*, as taught in the grammar ; and in the whole later literature, epic and classical, I find record of the occurrence of only one further case, *darçayitāhe* (in Nāiṣ. V 71.)!<sup>1</sup> Here also, the classical dialect is the true continuator of the pre-classical ; it is only in the grammarians' Sanskrit that every verb conjugated in the middle voice has also a middle periphrastic future.

There is another and much more important part of verbal inflection—namely, the whole aorist-system, in all its variety—as to which the statements of the grammarians are to be received with especial distrust, for the reason that in the classical language the aorist is a decadent formation. In the older dialects, down to the last Sūtra, and through the entire list of early and genuine Upanishads, the aorist has its own special office, that of designating the immediate past, and is always to be found where such designation is called for ; later, even in the epos, it is only another preterit, equivalent in use to imperfect and perfect, and hence of no value, and subsisting only in occasional use, mainly as a survival from an earlier condition of the language. Thus, for example, of the first kind of aorist, the root-aorist, forms are made in pre-classical Sanskrit from about 120 roots ; of these, 15 make forms in the later language also, mostly sporadically (only *gā*, *dā*, *dhā*, *pā*, *sthā*, *bhū* less infrequently) ; and 8 more in the later language only, all in an occurrence or two (all but one, in active precativ forms, as to which see below). Again, of the fifth aorist-form, the *iṣ*-aorist (rather the

<sup>1</sup> Here, as elsewhere below, my authority for the later literature is chiefly the Petersburg Lexicon (the whole older literature I have examined for myself), and my statements are, of course, always open to modification by the results of further researches. But all the best and most genuine part of the literature has been carefully and thoroughly excerpted for the Lexicon ; and for the Mahābhārata we have now the explicit statements of Holtzmann, in his Gram-matisches aus dem Mahabharata, Leipzig, 1884.



most frequent of all), forms are made in the older language from 140 roots, and later from only 18 of these (and sporadically, except in the case of *grah*, *vad*, *vadh*, *vid*), with a dozen more in the later language exclusively, all sporadic except *ṣaṅk* (which is not a Vedic root). Once more, as regards the third or reduplicated aorist, the proportion is slightly different, because of the association of that aorist with the causative conjugation, and the frequency of the latter in use; here, against about 110 roots quotable from the earlier language, 16 of them also in the later, there are about 30 found in the later alone (nearly all of them only sporadically, and none with any frequency). And the case is not otherwise with the remaining forms. The facts being such, it is easily seen that general statements made by the grammarians as to the range of occurrence of each form, and as to the occurrence of one form in the active and a certain other one in the middle from a given root, must be of very doubtful authority; in fact, as regards the latter point, they are the more suspicious as lacking any tolerable measure of support from the facts of the older language. But there are much greater weaknesses than these in the grammarians' treatment of the aorist.

Let us first turn our attention to the aorist optative, the so-called precativē (or benedictivē). This formation is by the native grammarians not recognized as belonging to the aorist at all—not even so far as to be put next the aorist in their general scheme of conjugation; they suffer the future-systems to intervene between the two. This is in them fairly excusable as concerns the precativē active, since it is the optative of the root-aorist, and so has an aspect as if it might come independently from the root directly; nor, indeed, can we much blame them for overlooking the relation of their precativē middle to the sibilant or sigmatic aorist, considering that they ignore tense-systems and modes; but that their European imitators, down to the very latest, should commit the same oversight is a different matter. The contrast, now, between the grammarians' dialect and the real Sanskrit is most marked as regards the middle forms. According to the grammar, the precativē middle is to be made from every root, and even for its secondary conjugations, the causative etc. It has two alternative modes of formation, which we see to correspond to two of the forms of the sibilant aorist: the *s*-aorist, namely, and the *ṣ*-aorist. Of course, a complete inflection is allowed it. To justify all this, now, I am able to point to only a single occurrence of a middle

precativ in the whole later literature, including the epics: that is *virīṣiṣṭa*, in the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa (III 9, 24), a text notable for its artificial imitation of ancient forms (the same word occurs also in the Rīg-Veda); it is made, as will be noticed, from a reduplicated aorist stem, and so is unauthorized by grammatical rule. A single example in a whole literature, and that a false one! In the pre-classical literature also, middle precativ forms are made hardly more than sporadically, or from less than 40 roots in all (so far as I have found); those belonging to the *s* and *iṣ*-aorists are, indeed, among the most numerous (14 each), but those of the root-aorist do not fall short of them (also 14 roots), and there are examples from three of the other four aorists. Except a single 3d pl. (in *īrata*, instead of *iran*), only the three singular persons and the 1st pl. are quotable, and forms occur without as well as with the adscititious *s* between mode-sign and personal ending which is the special characteristic of a precativ as distinguished from a simply optative form. Here, again, we have a formation sporadic in the early language and really extinct in the later, but erected by the grammarians into a regular part of every verb-system.

With the precativ active the case is somewhat different. This also, indeed, is rare even to sporadicness, being, so far as I know, made from only about 60 roots in the whole language—and of these, only half can show forms containing the true precativ *s*. But it is not quite limited to the pre-classical dialects; it is made also later from 15 roots, 9 of which are additional to those which make a precativ in the older language. Being in origin an optative of the root-aorist, it comes, as we may suppose, to seem to be a formation from the root directly, and so to be extended beyond the limits of the aorist; from a clear majority (about three fifths) of all the roots that make it, it has no other aorist-forms by its side. And this begins even in the earliest period (with half-a-dozen roots in the Veda, and toward a score besides in the Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra); although there the precativ more usually makes a part of a general aorist-formation: for instance, and especially, from the root *bhū*, whose precativ forms are oftener met with than those of all other roots together, and which is the only root from which more than two real precativ persons are quotable. How rare it is even in the epos is shown by the fact that Holtzmann<sup>1</sup> is able to quote only six forms (and one of these

<sup>1</sup> In his work already cited, at p. 32.

doubtful, and another a false formation) from the whole Mahābhārata, one of them occurring twice; while the first book of the Rāmāyaṇa (about 4500 lines) has the single *bhūyāt*. Since it is not quite extinct in the classical period, the Hindu grammarians could not, perhaps, well help teaching its formation; and, considering the general absence of perspective from their work, we should hardly expect them to explain that it was the rare survival of an anciently little-used formation; but we have here another striking example of the great discordance between the real Sanskrit and the grammarians' dialect, and of the insufficiency of the information respecting the former obtainable from the rules for the latter.

Again, the reduplicated or third form of aorist, though it has become attached to the causative secondary conjugation (by a process in the Veda not yet complete), as the regular aorist of that conjugation, is not made from the derivative causative stem, but comes from the root itself, not less directly than do the other aorist-formations—except in the few cases where the causative stem contains a *p* added to *ā*: thus, *atiṣṭhipat* from stem *sthāpaya*, root *sthā*. Perhaps misled by this exception, however, the grammarians teach the formation of the reduplicated aorist from the causative stem, through the intermediate process of converting the stem back to the root, by striking off its conjugation-sign and reducing its strengthened vowel to the simpler root-form. That is to say, we are to make, for example, *abūbhuvat* from the stem *bhāvaya*, by cutting off *aya* and reducing the remainder *bhāv* or *bhāu* to *bhū*, instead of making it from *bhū* directly! That is a curious etymological process; quite a side-piece to deriving *variṇas* and *variṣṭha* from *uru*, and the like, as the Hindu grammarians and their European copyists would likewise have us do. There is one point where the matter is brought to a crucial test: namely, in roots that end in *u* or *ū*; where, if the vowel on which the reduplication is formed is an *u*-vowel, the reduplication-vowel should be of the same character; but, in any other case, an *i*-vowel. Thus, in the example already taken, *bhāvaya* ought to make *abibhavat*, just as it makes *bibhāvayaṣati* in the case of a real derivation from the causative stem; and such forms as *abibhavat* are, in fact, in a great number of cases either prescribed or allowed by the grammarians; but I am not aware of their having been ever met with in use, earlier or later, with the single exception of *apiplavam*, occurring once in the Ṣaṭpatha-Brahmaṇa (VI ii, 1, 8).

Again, the grammarians give a peculiar and problematic rule for an alternative formation of certain passive tenses (aorist and futures) from the special 3d sing. aor. pass.; they allow it in the case of all roots ending in vowels, and of *grah*, *ḍṛṣ*, *han*. Thus, for example, from the root *dā* are allowed *adāyīṣi*, *dāyīṣyate*, *dāyītā*, beside *adiṣi*, *dāsyate*, *dātā*. What all this means is quite obscure, since there is no usage, either early or late, to cast light upon it. The Rig-Veda has once (I 147, 5) *dhāyīs*, from root *dhā*; but this, being active, is rather a hindrance than a help. The Jām. Brāhmaṇa has once (I 321) *ākhyāyīṣyante*; but this appears to be a form analogous with *hvayīṣyate* etc., and so proves nothing. The Bhāg. Purāṇa has once (VIII 13, 36) *tāyītā*, which the Petersburg Lexicon refers to root *tan*; but if there is such a thing as the secondary root *tāy*, as claimed by the grammarians, it perhaps belongs rather there. And there remain, so far as I can discover, only *asthāyīṣi* (Daçak. [Wilson], p. 117, l. 6) and *anāyīṣata* (Ind. Sprüche<sup>2</sup>, 6187, from the Kuvalayānanda); and these are with great probability to be regarded as artificial forms, made because the grammar declares them correct. It seems not unlikely that some misapprehension or blunder lies at the foundation of these rules of the grammar; at any rate, the formation is only grammarians' Sanskrit, and not even pandits'; and it should never be obtruded upon the attention of beginners in the language.

Again, the secondary ending *dhvam* of 2d pl. mid. sometimes has to take the form *ḍhvam*. In accordance with the general euphonic usages of the language, this should be whenever in the present condition of Sanskrit there has been lost before the ending a lingual sibilant; thus: we have *aneḍhvam* from *aneṣ + dhvam*, and *apaviḍhvam* from *apaviṣ + dhvam*; we should further have in the precative *bhaviṣḍhvam* from *bhaviṣi-ṣ-dhvam*, if the form ever occurred, as, unfortunately, it does not. And, so far as I know, there is not to be found, either in the earlier language or the later (and as to the former I can speak with authority), a single instance of *ḍhvam* in any other situation—the test-cases, however, being far from numerous. But the Hindu grammarians, if they are reported rightly by their European pupils (which in this instance is hard to believe), give rules as to the change of the ending upon this basis only for the *s*-aorist; for the *iṣ*-aorist and its optative (the precative), they make the choice between *ḍhvam* and *dhvam* to depend upon whether the *i* is or is not "preceded by a semi-vowel or *h*:" that is, *apaviṣ + dhvam* gives *apaviḍhvam*, but *ajanīṣ*

+ *dhvam* gives *ajanidhvam*, and so likewise we should have *janiṣidhvam*. It would be curious to know what ground the grammarians imagined themselves to have for laying down such a rule as this, wherein there is a total absence of discoverable connection between cause and effect; and it happens that all the quotable examples—*ajanidhvam*, *artidhvam*, *aindhidhvam*, *vepidhvam*—are opposed to their rule, but accordant with reason. What is yet worse, however, is that the grammar extends the same conversion of *dh* to *ḍh*, under the same restrictions, to the primary ending *dhve* of the perfect likewise, with which it has nothing whatever to do—teaching us that, for instance, *cakṛ* and *tuṣṭu* + *dhve* make necessarily *cakṛḍhve* and *tuṣṭuḍhve*, and that *dadhr-i* + *dhve* makes either *dadhriḍhve* or *dadhridhve*, while *tutud-i* + *dhve* makes only *tutudidhve*! This appears to me the most striking case of downright unintelligent blundering on the part of the native grammarians that has come to notice; if there is any way of relieving them of the reproach of it, their partisans ought to cast about at once to find it.

A single further matter of prime importance may be here referred to, in illustration of the character of the Hindu grammarians as classifiers and presenters of the facts of their language. By reason of the extreme freedom and wonderful regularity of word-composition in Sanskrit, the grammarians were led to make a classification of compounds in a manner that brought true enlightenment to European scholars; and the classification has been largely adopted as a part of modern philological science, along even with its bizarre terminology. Nothing could be more accurate and happier than the distinction of dependent, descriptive, possessive, and copulative compounds; only their titles—‘his man’ (*tatpuruṣa*), ‘act-sustaining’ (? *karmadhāraya*), ‘much-rice’ (*bahuvrīhi*), and ‘couple’ (*dvandva*), respectively—can hardly claim to be worth preserving. But it is the characteristic of Hindu science generally not to be able to stop when it has done enough; and so the grammarians have given us, on the same plane of division with these four capital classes, two more, which they call *dvigu* (‘two-cow’) and *avyayibhāva* (‘indeclinable-becoming’); and these have no *raison d’être*, but are collections of special cases belonging to some of the other classes, and so heterogeneous that their limits are hardly capable of definition: the *dvigu*-class are secondary adjective compounds, but sometimes, like other adjectives, used as nouns; and an *avyayibhāva* is always the adverbially-

used accusative neuter of an adjective compound. It would be a real service on the part of some scholar, versed in the Hindu science, to draw out a full account of the so-called *dvigu*-class and its boundaries, and to show if possible how the grammarians were misled into establishing it. But it will probably be long before these two false classes cease to haunt the concluding chapters of Sanskrit grammars, or writers on language to talk of the six kinds of compounds in Sanskrit.<sup>1</sup>

Points in abundance, of major or minor consequence, it would be easy to bring up in addition, for criticism or for question. Thus, to take a trifle or two: according to the general analogies of the language, we ought to speak of the root *gr̥h*, instead of *grah*; probably the Hindu science adopts the latter form because of some mechanical advantage on the side of brevity resulting from it, in the rules prescribing forms and derivatives: the instances are not few in which that can be shown to have been the preponderating consideration, leading to the sacrifice of things more important. One may conjecture that similar causes led to the setting up of a root *div* instead of *dīv*, 'play, gamble': that it may have been found easier to prescribe the prolongation of the *i* than its irregular gunation, in *devana* etc. This has unfortunately misled the authors of the Petersburg Lexicons into their strange and indefensible identification of the asserted root *div* 'play' with the so-called root *div* 'shine': the combination of meanings is forced and unnatural; and then especially the phonetic form of the two roots is absolutely distinct, the one showing only short *i* and *u* (as in *divam*, *dyubhis*), the other always and only long *ī* and *ū* (as in *dīvyati*, *-dīvan*, and *-dyū*, *dyūta*); the one root is really *diu*, and the other *dīū* (it may be added that the Petersburg Lexicon, on similar evidence, inconsistently but correctly writes the roots *sīv* and *srīv*, instead of *siv* and *sriv*).

It would be easy to continue the work of illustration much further; but this must be enough to show how and how far we have to use and to trust the teachings of the Hindu grammarians. Or,

<sup>1</sup> Spiegel, for example (Altiranische Grammatik, p. 229), thinks it necessary to specify that *dvigu*-compounds do, to be sure, occur also in the Old Persian dialects, but that they in no respect form a special class; and a very recent Sanskrit grammar in Italian (Pulle, Turin, 1883) gives as the four primary classes of compounds the *dvandva*, *tatpuruṣa*, *bahuvrīhi*, and *avyayibhāva*—as if one were to say that the kingdoms in Nature are four: animal, vegetable, mineral, and cactuses.

if one prefer to employ the Benfeyan phrase, we see something of what this language is which has a grammar but not an existence, and in what relation it stands to the real Sanskrit language, begun in the Veda, and continued without a break down to our own times, all the rules of the grammar having been able only slightly to stiffen and unnaturalize it. Surely, what we desire to have to do with is the Sanskrit, and not the imaginary dialect that fits the definitions of Pāṇini. There is no escaping the conclusion that, if we would understand Sanskrit, we may not take the grammarians as authorities, but only as witnesses; not a single rule given or fact stated by them is to be accepted on their word, without being tested by the facts of the language as laid down in the less subjective and more trustworthy record of the literature. Of course, most of what the native grammar teaches is true and right; but, until after critical examination, no one can tell which part. Of course, also, there is more or less of genuine supplementary material in the grammarians' treatises—material especially lexical, but doubtless in some measure also grammatical—which needs to be worked in so as to complete our view of the language; but what this genuine material is, as distinguished from the artificial and false, is only to be determined by a thorough and cautious comparison of the entire system of the grammar with the whole recorded language. Such a comparison has not yet been made, and is hardly even making: in part, to be sure, because the time for it has been long in coming; but mainly because those who should be making it are busy at something else. The skilled students of the native grammar, as it seems to me, have been looking at their task from the wrong point of view, and laboring in the wrong direction. They have been trying to put the non-existent grammarians' dialect in the place of the genuine Sanskrit. They have thought it their duty to learn out of Pāṇini and his successors, and to set forth for the benefit of the world, what the Sanskrit really is, instead of studying and setting forth and explaining (and, where necessary, accounting for and excusing) Pāṇini's system itself. They have failed to realize that, instead of a divine revelation, they have in their hands a human work—a very able one, indeed, but also imperfect, like other human works, full of the prescription in place of description that characterizes all Hindu productions, and most perversely constructed; and that in studying it they are only studying a certain branch of Hindu science: one that is, indeed, of the highest interest, and has an

important bearing on the history of the language, especially since the *dicta* of the grammarians have had a marked influence in shaping the latest form of Sanskrit—not always to its advantage. Hence the insignificant amount of real progress that the study of Hindu grammar has made in the hands of European scholars. Its career was well inaugurated, now nearly forty-five years ago (1839-40), by Böhtlingk's edition of Pāṇini's text, with extracts from the native commentaries, followed by an extremely stingy commentary by the editor; but it has not been succeeded by anything of importance,<sup>1</sup> until now that a critical edition of the *Mahābhāṣya*, by Kielhorn, is passing through the press, and is likely soon to be completed: a highly meritorious work, worthy of European learning, and likely, if followed up in the right spirit, to begin a new era in its special branch of study. Considering the extreme difficulty of the system, and the amount of labor that is required before the student can win any available mastery of it, it is incumbent upon the representatives of the study to produce an edition of Pāṇini accompanied with a version, a digest of the leading comments on each rule, and an index that shall make it possible to find what the native authorities teach upon each given point: that is to say, to open the grammatical science to knowledge virtually at first hand without the lamentable waste of time thus far unavoidable—a waste, because both needless and not sufficiently rewarded by its results.

A curious kind of superstition appears to prevail among certain Sanskrit scholars: they cannot feel that they have the right to accept a fact of the language unless they find it set down in Pāṇini's rules. It may well be asked, on the contrary, of what consequence it is, except for its bearing on the grammatical science itself, whether a given fact is or is not so set down. A fact in the pre-classical language is confessedly quite independent of Pāṇini; he may take account of it and he may not; and no one knows as yet what the ground is of the selection he makes for inclusion in his system. As for a fact in the classical language, it is altogether likely to fall within the reach of one of the great

<sup>1</sup> For the photographic reproduction, in 1874, of a single manuscript of Patanjali's *Mahābhāṣya* or 'Great Comment' (on Pāṇini), with the glosses upon it, was but a costly piece of child's play; and the English government, as if to make the enterprise a complete *fiasco*, sent all the copies thus prepared to India, to be buried there in native keeping, instead of placing them in European libraries, within reach of Western scholars.



grammarian's rules—at least, as these have been extended and restricted and amended by his numerous successors: and this is a thing much to the credit of the grammar; but what bearing it has upon the language would be hard to say. If, however, we should seem to meet with a fact ignored by the grammar, or contravening its rules, we should have to look to see whether supporting facts in the language did not show its genuineness in spite of the grammar. On the other hand, there are facts in the language, especially in its latest records, which have a false show of existence, being the artificial product of the grammar's prescription or permission; and there was nothing but the healthy conservatism of the true tradition of the language to keep them from becoming vastly more numerous. And then, finally, there are the infinite number of facts which, so far as the grammar is concerned, should be or might be in the language, only that they do not happen ever to occur there; for here lies the principal discordance between the grammar and the language. The statement of the grammar that such a thing is so and so is of quite uncertain value, until tested by the facts of the language; and in this testing, it is the grammar that is on trial, that is to be condemned for artificiality or commended for faithfulness; not the language, which is quite beyond our jurisdiction. It cannot be too strongly urged that the Sanskrit, even that of the most modern authors, even that of the pandits of the present day, is the successor, by natural processes of tradition, of the older dialects; and that the grammar is a more or less successful attempt at its description, the measure of the success being left for us to determine, by comparison of the one with the other.

To maintain this is not to disparage the Hindu grammatical science; it is only to put it in its true place. The grammar remains nearly if not altogether the most admirable product of the scientific spirit in India, ranking with the best products of that spirit that the world has seen; we will scant no praise to it, if we only are not called on to bow down to it as authoritative. So we regard the Greek science of astronomy as one of the greatest and most creditable achievements of the human intellect since men first began to observe and deduce; but we do not plant ourselves upon its point of view in setting forth the movements of the heavenly bodies—though the men of the Middle Ages did so, to their advantage, and the system of epicycles maintained itself in existence, by dint of pure conservatism, long after its artificiality had

been demonstrated. That the early European Sanskrit grammars assumed the basis and worked in the methods of the Hindu science was natural and praiseworthy. Bopp was the first who had knowledge and independence enough to begin effectively the work of subordinating Hindu to Western science, using the materials and deductions of the former so far as they accorded with the superior methods of the latter, and turning his attention to the records of the language itself, as fast as they became accessible to him. Since his time, there has been in some respects a retrogression rather than an advance; European scholars have seemed to take satisfaction in submitting themselves slavishly to Hindu teachers, and the grammarians' dialect has again been thrust forward into the place which the Sanskrit language ought to occupy. To refer to but a striking example or two: in Müller's grammar the native science is made the supreme rule after a fashion that is sometimes amusing in its naïveté, and the genuine and the fictitious are mingled inextricably, in his rules, his illustrations, and his paradigms, from one end of the volume to the other. And a scholar of the highest rank, long resident in India but now of Vienna, Professor Bühler, has only last year put forth a useful practical introduction to the language, with abundant exercises for writing and speaking,<sup>1</sup> in which the same spirit of subservience to Hindu methods is shown in an extreme degree, and both forms and material are not infrequently met with which are not Sanskrit, but belong only to the non-existent grammarians' dialect. Its standpoint is clearly characterized by its very first clause, which teaches that "Sanskrit verbs have ten tenses and modes"—that is to say, because the native grammar failed to make the distinction between tense and mode, or to group these formations together into systems, coming from a common tense-stem, Western pupils are to be taught to do the same. This seems about as much an anachronism as if the author had begun, likewise after Hindu example, with the statement that "Sanskrit parts of speech are four: name, predicate, preposition, and particle." Further on, in the same paragraph, he allows (since the Hindus also do so) that "the first four [tenses and modes] are derived from a special present stem"; but he leaves it to be implied, both here and later, that the remaining six come directly from the root. From this we

<sup>1</sup> This work, somewhat recast grammatically, is about to be reproduced in English by Professor Perry, of Columbia College, New York.

should have to infer, for example, that *dadāti* comes from a stem, but *dadātha* from the root; that we are to divide *naçya-ti* but *dā-syati*, *a-viça-t* but *a-sic-at*, and so on; and (though this is a mere oversight) that *ayāt* contains a stem, but *adāt* a pure root. No real grammarian can talk of present stems without talking of aorist stems also; nor is the variety of the latter so much inferior to that of the former; it is only the vastly greater frequency of occurrence of present forms that makes the differences of their stems the more important ground of classification. These are but specimens of the method of the book, which, in spite of its merits, is not in its present form a good one to put in the hands of beginners, because it teaches them so much that they will have to unlearn later, if they are to understand the Sanskrit language.

One more point, of minor consequence, may be noted, in which the habit of Western philology shows itself too subservient to the whims of the Sanskrit native grammarians: the order of the varieties of present stems, and the designation of the conjugation classes as founded on it. We accept the Hindu order of the cases in noun-inflection, not seeking to change it, though unfamiliar, because we see that it has a reason, and a good one; but no one has ever been ingenious enough even to conjecture a reason for the Hindu order of the classes. Chance itself, if they had been thrown together into a hat, and set down in their order as drawn out, could not more successfully have sundered what belongs together, and juxtaposed the discordant. That being the case, there is no reason for our paying any heed to the arrangement. In fact, the heed that we do pay is a perversion; the Hindus do not speak of first class, second class, etc., but call each class by the name of its leading verb, as *bhū*-verbs, *ad*-verbs, and so on; and it was a decided merit of Müller, in his grammar, to try to substitute for the mock Hindu method this true one, which does not make such a dead pull upon the mechanical memory of the learner. As a matter of course, the most defensible and acceptable method is that of calling each class by its characteristic feature—as, the reduplicating class, the *ya*-class, and so on. But one still meets, in treatises and papers on general philology, references to verbs “of the fourth class,” “of the seventh class,” and so on. So far as this is not mere mechanical habit, it is pedantry—as if one meant to say: “I am so familiar with the Sanskrit language and its native grammar that I can tell the order in which the bodies of similarly-conjugated roots follow one another in the *dhātupāṭhas*,

though no one knows any reason for it, and the Hindu grammarians themselves lay no stress upon it." It is much to be hoped that this affectation will die out, and soon.

These and such as these are sufficient reasons why an exposition like that here given is timely and pertinent. It needs to be impressed on the minds of scholars that the study of the Sanskrit language is one thing, and the study of the Hindu science of grammar another and a very different thing; that while there has been a time when the latter was the way to the former, that time is now long past, and the relation of the two reversed; that the present task of the students of the grammar is to make their science accessible, account if possible for its anomalies, and determine how much and what can be extracted from it to fill out that knowledge of the language which we derive from the literature; and that the peculiar Hindu ways of grouping and viewing and naming facts familiar to us from the other related languages are an obstacle in the way of a real and fruitful comprehension of those facts as they show themselves in Sanskrit, and should be avoided. An interesting sentimental glamour, doubtless, is thrown over the language and its study by the retention of an odd classification and terminology; but that attraction is dearly purchased at the cost of a tittle of clearness and objective truth.

W. D. WHITNEY.